

Summary of Discussions at Workshop on Successful Collaboration and Transfer of ORD Products to the EPA Regions

Opening Comments

- 1) Dick Garnas (ORD/OSP) – meeting is to share experiences related to collaboration and the transfer of products. Focusing on how ORD develops products in conjunction with regions and how to get them out to the regions.
- 2) Pat Burke (ORD/NRMRL) on RTP workshop in November 2005
 - a) RSL's don't have time to use databases or search publications for answers.
 - b) ORD needs to market research so it's useful at the right time.
 - c) When you have a great product, you need to demonstrate its power. Include travel in communication strategy and get regions involved in rolling it out.
 - d) OSP hosts product expos – very popular with regional staff, state and local users. Involve key customers along the way to ground truth the research.

Presentations

Florence Fulk (Acting Director, ORD/NERL/EERD) – Regional PARTnerships

- 1) External driver is PART – developed to strengthen and reinforce GPRA. Identify program strengths and weaknesses. Also informs program management decisions
- 2) Questionnaire completed by the program being assessed – opportunity to state your case. 5-yr rotation.
 - a) 4 areas: program purpose and design (20%), strategic planning (10%), program mgmt (20%), program results and accountability (50%). Evaluating progress to achieve targets for APGs
 - b) “Effective” is best, then “moderately effective,” “adequate,” “ineffective,” and “results not demonstrated.”
- 3) Effective programs were able to be very specific about their impact – e.g., estimated lives saved. So, need baselines and targets.
 - a) Must increase scores. Need to demonstrate linkage between ORD research and achievement of outcomes through linkage with regional and state level.
 - b) Need partnerships - Demonstrate contribution of ORD research to past regional decision-making, improve delivery of ORD science and expertise to inform regional decisions, promote partnerships that achieve designed environmental outcomes thru MYP process.
- 4) OSP has initiative to push collaboration – identify examples of how ORD research has led to concrete outcomes and to expand regional collaboration
- 5) Ultimately collaboration is critical to our mission to protect and restore the environment.

David Macarus – RSL for Region 5

- 1) The 10 RSLs are your regional connections – Hillger, O'Shea, Landy, Baugh, Macarus, Callahan, Grozinsky, Tyler, Smith, Lorenzana
- 2) How ORD can work with Regions
 - a) Hold regional workshops 2-3 time/yr - involve ORD & outside scientists promoting work.
 - b) Participate in ORD seminars on site and remote,
 - c) RARE program – \$2M/yr and Regional Methods Initiative - \$600k – for analytical methods on biological and chemical side
 - d) Regional Research Partnership Program
 - e) Product Expo's – 3 to 5 put on per year
 - f) Scientist-to-Scientist connections
 - g) ORD provides technical advice to regions on high priority issues

- h) Regions provide input into ORD planning process thru Research Coordination Teams (RCTs)
- i) Much of ORD work has positive impact on regions, but not visible to regional mgrs. Get regions involved earlier so region mgrs hear more about ORD products that help regional decision makers, more visible help to mgrs, helps ORD with PART.

Trish Erikson (NRMRL Assistant Lab Director, Land).

- 1) Research process starts with planning, ends with technology transfer. We need to provide technical support and technology transfer.
 - a) Evolving process. Basic and applied research, field testing and demonstrations, implementation and tech support.
 - b) Regions are the problem owners. They inform what we work on. They also have access to sites and partners for field testing and demos – provide real data sets.
 - c) Regions are a big measure of PART success.
- 2) Planning process
 - a) Formal role for regions – RCTs have reps. National Regional Science Council has identified 14 priorities and set up workgroups.
 - b) Informal – serving on topic and interest groups – very useful.
 - c) New concept in Land program – ad hoc research advisory Workgroups.
- 3) Products – not just journal articles and conference proceedings.
 - a) Suggest pulling central themes for guidance that will be used by contractors and state operators.
 - b) Issue papers – 8-20 page client-focused collection of info. on what we know.
 - c) Bulletins and fact sheets also helpful – 2 pager.
 - d) Tech support. Get others to do training. Get your stuff on other people's sites. Use Clue-in (webinar software). Get products into sites hosted by other people
 - i) All contributes to external evaluation. SAB review, BOSC review really valued collaboration – positive external reviews count significantly in PART score.

General Suggestions From Panel Discussion

- 1) Work with customers from beginning (cradle to grave) – identify needs (active listening).
- 2) Remember – it's the region's agenda.
- 3) Get engagement by giving stakeholder an opportunity for input. Pull together formal or informal workgroups. Build communication network – local presentations
 - a) Work through disagreements – acknowledge point
 - b) Seek collaboration, consensus-bldg and facilitative leadership.
 - c) Scientists are the problem-solvers
- 4) Make a useful and important product - identify highest priority needs and develop team that will be useful to states, regions, Program Offices.
- 5) Ensure you present products in useful form and assess utility.
- 6) Watch out for mission creep. Draw the line with time and resources – train states to train others.
- 7) Success breeds success.
- 8) Identified research agenda by working with relevant stakeholders: identify data gaps & research within our authority; meet with stakeholders to ensure we're hitting right research.
- 9) No single approach. Take initiative - pick up the phone and call any RSL or HSTL
 - a) Let regions know when you're doing field work
 - b) Work with those who have capabilities or access we don't.
 - c) Face-to-face with region scientists and managers can be very effective.

Focus Topics

- 1) Enhancing Scientist-to-Scientist interactions
 - a) “Top down” – have AA’s send a letter emphasizing importance of interaction
 - b) RSL’s can set up brown-bag luncheons when ORD investigators make trips at field work site.
 - c) Including region and ORD managers in conversations.
 - i) Develop 2 page proposals for region managers.
 - ii) RSLs can get ORD investigators on agenda of regional directors calls to report on what’s ready to use.
- 2) Balancing Long-Term MYP and technical responsiveness
 - a) Need to improve regional involvement in MYP writing (integration)
 - b) Need to integrate technical support – have a placeholder (but caution that placeholders are targets for cuts.
 - c) Prioritize ORD efforts (need criteria?) – “classifying” regional needs
 - d) Regions need to provide feedback on utility of ORD products and technical assistance.
- 3) Building Relationships
 - a) Recognize and value different perspectives of ORD and regions
 - b) RSL/HSTLs are critical link
 - c) Link to existing networks, seminars, webinars, conference calls, listservers
 - d) Need a sales force for ORD products and to bring back the newest issues
 - e) Treat regions as colleagues – co-authorship and providing some equipment can build a lot of goodwill with managers.
- 4) ORD Product life cycle
 - a) ORD needs to get feedback on utility and applications of products. Build it upfront into collaboration.
 - b) Focus on building the relationships rather than counting the beans. ORD’s success is regions’ success
 - c) National Regional Council develops lists of needs.
 - d) OSP houses FTTA function to help with patents, CRADAs, MTAs, licensing
 - e) Scientists can take product through life cycles themselves
- 5) Recognizing/Communicating Relevance to Decision-makers
 - a) Funds from RARE and Regional Methods Initiative can help leverage own resources.
 - b) Sometimes seed funding in one year attracts additional funding in subsequent years.
 - c) Tracking product utility and application would help.
 - d) Fit projects to region priorities (ones for Region 5 are very broad)
 - e) When writing an APM product, need to add the tech-transfer product..

Next Steps

- 1) Post RTP and Cinc workshop summaries and presentations on OSP website (Dick)
- 2) What ORD PIs can do
 - a) Send RSL’s monthly updates from T&E to send to their drinking water folks
 - b) Will send gist of projects on children’s health to forward to interested persons
 - c) Can send product to RSL after get L/C/O clearance, so RSL can tell us what to do with it and forward it to right people
- 3) What RSLs can do
 - a) Send notice about annual regional meeting to ORD-All
 - b) Send calendar of meetings and forums (seminars, webinars, conf. calls, listservers) to Dick for posting on OSP website.